

CHRISTOPH KUGELMEIER: *Reflexe früher und zeitgenössischer Lyrik in der Alten attischen Komödie*. Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, Bd. 80. B.G. Teubner, Stuttgart und Leipzig 1996. ISBN 3-519-07629-2. 379 S. DEM 136.

This study deals with a subject which naturally has been touched upon in many earlier treatises and commentaries, but definitely deserves a thorough new discussion, which takes into account the modern views of the spreading and transmission of literature in the society of classical Athens, where both orality (or aurality) and literacy had their important roles. By “reflections”, more or less direct quotations as well as free stylistic imitation are meant, “lyric” includes melic as well as choral lyric (with the exception of tragedy), elegy, iambic poetry and the new dithyramb, and “Old Comedy” is understandably almost totally centred upon Aristophanes.

The main interest of the author is perhaps reflected in the great amount of pages (110) dedicated to the new dithyramb (ch. vi); this part, as also the chapter on iambography (ch. v), contains many illuminating discussions both of particular passages and of general issues connected with comedy. It would probably have been better to treat the other poetic genres in the same way, discussing genre by genre the famous passages especially loved by the comedians and the ways they used these reminiscences in their own work. Now, melos, choros and elegy are dealt together in ch. iv, divided into sections according to the appearance of the quotations in different parts of the comedy (lyric parts of parabasis, non-lyric parts of parabasis, other choral parts, agon etc.). In this way, the discussion remains somewhat disjointed. There are, moreover, some inconsistencies in this arrangement; Ar. Ach. 636-638 (parabasis) and Equ. 1323 and 1329 (dialogue with the chorus-leader) are treated together with Nub. 299ff. (parodos) in the section “other (sc. than parabasis) choral parts” - naturally enough since all of them reflect the same Pindaric passage (fr. 76 Snell), but against the disposition of the author; in the same section one finds also Av. 904ff. (dialogue in an episode) and Av. 1337ff. (an actor’s lyrics); in the section of agon one finds Av. 1362f. (dialogue in an episode). Reflections of scolia, again, are discussed in an introductory chapter (iii) “Schulunterricht und Symposion als Überlieferungsträger” regardless of in which part of comedy they appear. Another introductory chapter (ii) “Die Überlieferung der alten Poesie in den Komödientexten” deals mainly with the difficulties connected with the transmission of dialectal features of the texts; this discussion is preceded by a short and rather superficial survey of the development of “Buchkultur” in Athens, where one misses some references to literature - in connection with descriptions of book rolls on vases, the articles by H.R. Immerwahr (1964, 1973) are not mentioned, and the informative book by H. Blanck, *Das Buch in der Antike* (1992) is ignored.

In spite of these critical remarks, Kugelmeier’s book is well worth consulting. The discussions of individual passages are often very informative, and in the final chapter (vii), some interesting lines are drawn. Personally, I would have liked to read more e.g. on the question how the quotations found in comedy reflect the acquaintance of the general public with the poets of the past. The author takes up the theme occasionally, but mainly he seems to be more interested in the skilful way Aristophanes plays with the poets. And this is of course an interesting issue, too.